

partnering with me to build on this proposal by eliminating age limits and emphasizing pre-apprenticeship eligibility.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join us in supporting career pathways and a chance for everyone to succeed in our changing economy.

#### HONORING THE LIFE OF J. PAUL TAYLOR

(Mr. VASQUEZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. VASQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the life of a local educator, State legislator, and hometown hero, Mr. J. Paul Taylor. He was a visionary leader who made a lasting impact on our community and across the State.

When I think of public service and what it means to be a public servant, I think of J. Paul Taylor. I think of his kindness, passion, and dedication to our State. New Mexico is a better place because of him.

J. Paul Taylor served in the New Mexico House of Representatives for nearly 20 years. Many referred to him as the conscience of the legislature. He led with his heart, found common ground through his bipartisanship, and did everything with New Mexico in mind.

His service to New Mexico continued after he retired. A longtime educator, serving as a teacher and principal, he served on the New Mexico Education Association two times as president.

Last August, we celebrated his 102nd birthday with a visit to his home in Las Cruces.

He had a reputation as a passionate educator and advocated for the arts and culture, and was a leader in bilingual education in the State.

J. Paul Taylor was a true friend and mentor to many in New Mexico. From the bottom of my heart, I thank him for being a true public servant and dedicating his life to making a positive difference in our State. Let's all remember his love for public service and for advancing equitable education in New Mexico.

#### INVESTING IN EDUCATION

(Mr. DAVIS of North Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DAVIS of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight the significance of investing in education. Education is widely seen as a key determinant of social mobility within a person's lifetime.

As the father of two school-age children, Justin and Kyler, my job is to love them, share with them about the importance of faith, provide for them, and ensure they receive a quality education. That is why education is so personal to me.

Mr. Speaker, there are 246 schools in the First Congressional District of North Carolina. Of those, 48 percent, nearly half, are fully funded by title I; and schools within 13 of the 19 counties I represent, 100 percent rely upon title I funding.

Mr. Speaker, we must invest in our public education system to set our kids up for a lifetime of success, while laying the groundwork for generations of prosperity across eastern North Carolina and America.

As part of my Live the Dream Down East tour, I will continue visiting schools in every county of my district.

#### SANDUSKY VOTED BEST COASTAL SMALL TOWN

(Ms. KAPTUR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the recently named Best Coastal Small Town in America, Sandusky, Ohio. Now, Sandusky is the home of Cedar Point, America's Roller Coast. We invite you to come. This town is the pride of Ohio's Ninth Congressional District, and this recognition is a true accomplishment.

Clubhouse No. 3 SportSocial, a local sports bar, erupted into cheers last Friday when dozens of residents at a watch party heard the results come in. Their enthusiasm is emblematic of small towns across America where people will gather as a community to celebrate achievements, both big and small. While this is a big accomplishment for a small Ohio town, it truly represents the best of America.

Sandusky derives its name from the Seneca Native American Tribe and translates into "cold water," but the residents of this town are some of the warmest, kindest people you will ever meet.

I encourage people from across America to visit Sandusky, come to enjoy our hospitality, and enjoy the astounding beauty of Lake Erie's freshwater south coast and the warmest coast in the entire freshwater Great Lakes.

#### HOW YOUR TAX DOLLARS ARE BEING SPENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ROY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. ROY. Mr. Speaker, yesterday we were given the President's budget, which outlines the President's so-called priorities.

Well, his priorities were pretty clear: Continue to expand government at the expense of the American people. Expand government, a government that is at odds with the freedom, well-being, and prosperity of the American people every single day.

The simple truth is, as my friends in the House Freedom Caucus and a large

number of my other colleagues in the Republican Conference have been articulating, we need to shrink Washington so that we can grow America.

We cannot sustain and grow out of the \$32 trillion of debt and the \$20 trillion of debt that the Congressional Budget Office just outlined that we are going to add over the next decade. We will not, as a country, survive through that if we do not get economic growth to the 3, 3½, and 4 percent levels that we saw under President Reagan, President Clinton, and in previous years. You are not going to get economic growth if you don't get the Federal Government off the backs of the American people and stop empowering them to target Americans, to undermine American freedoms.

Biden's budget would increase taxes and implement price controls to the tune of \$3 trillion. That is the President's plan.

What does the media do?

They run around and go: Oh, he is reducing the deficit. He is reducing the debt.

Yet, by his own measures, he would be increasing the debt another \$17 trillion over the next decade.

The American people look to this body and this town with utter amazement at how stupid we could possibly be. If you set out and tried to be more incompetent and more stupid than the people that have been running this town for as long as I can remember, I am not sure how you can do it.

Seriously. That would be a great exercise. Could anybody, if you put together 435 people here, 100 people on the other side, Presidents and bureaucrats, swapped out over the last, say, three decades, could it be any worse?

William F. Buckley said he would rather be governed by the first 435 people out of the phone book than the 435 people we send here. Is he wrong?

Seriously, it would be a great inquiry for us to consider.

We are \$32 trillion in debt. Our borders are wide open. We have got American citizens unable to carry out their livelihoods, men and women in uniform who are being denied promotions and the ability to do their job in the Defense Department. We have got kids shut out from their schools, forced into the corners wearing masks, mental health issues, and they are set back generations in terms of their academic capability.

That is the best we have got? That is the best we can do?

We reject that. We believe in America. We believe in Americans. We do not believe that investing in Washington, investing in the Federal bureaucracy is good for the American people. We believe the opposite.

The President wants to tax and regulate \$3 trillion to save increasing the debt \$3 trillion over the next decade, down to \$17 trillion. Whoo, boy, that will do it.

We propose an immediate savings of \$3 trillion right now by cutting back

the woke weaponized Federal bureaucracy that is undermining the freedom of the American people so that we can make them more free and prosperous so that they can grow this economy so we can shrink the deficit, reduce debt, and reclaim the inheritance of being an American for our kids and grandkids.

Think about what Biden's budget would do. It would spend a total of \$6.8 trillion next year, \$500 billion more than this year, \$2 billion for the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives to increase regulation of the firearms industry. I have got thousands of Texans that I represent who are facing being made a felon because a bureaucrat at ATF decided what precisely a pistol brace might mean for how their gun is regulated.

□ 1100

Think about that. Just some guy some, some gal sitting in central Texas bought a weapon under the law, and now a bureaucrat says you have got to do this, register this, or you are a felon.

Now, I think the Court will strike that down as unconstitutional, but why would this body, why would any Republican fund the bureaucracy that is going to make a felon out of the law-abiding citizen back home?

To my Republican colleagues: Don't do that.

How about \$3.9 billion for the Department of Homeland Security's climate resilience programs? Think about that. \$3.9 billion for the Department of Homeland Security, which, by the way, refuses to secure the homeland, allows 72,000 Americans to die from fentanyl poisoning, allows cartels to get empowered and slaughter Americans in the streets of Matamoros in northern Mexico without a peep from this administration. Nothing. Let's give that department \$3.9 billion for climate resilience programs. Does anybody wonder why the American people look at us and say what in the hell are you doing?

\$2 billion increase for the EPA to target American energy. Now, I want to remind people, I want to remind all the kids out there watching this thinking, oh, my God, but the world is going to end, we are going die, climate change, we are going to get extinguished. Oh, really? Oh, really?

Why is it that my Democratic colleagues who believe that the production of CO<sub>2</sub> is going to be the end to humanity and the Earth as we know it will not remotely consider nuclear power, which produces not an ounce of CO<sub>2</sub>, but they won't consider it? Why? Because it is a religion. It is climate fetishism. It is about government control. It is about being able to target the oil and gas industry to undermine the well-being of the American people by empowering bureaucrats so they can feel good about themselves while China continues to pump out more CO<sub>2</sub> than any other country, ratcheting it up week by week. There are 1,100 coal-fired plants in China. They build two a

week while we sit around and play tidlywinks with solar panels and windmills, leaving our grid in Texas unreliable, now almost 50 percent wind and solar. We have to think, wait, what happens on a windless, cloudy day? I don't know. How do you want to power up your schools or your hospitals or your homes or your businesses? Could it be that you have to rely on coal or gas or nuclear power? Of course, you do. Yet, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle—not here, of course; of course, with all due respect neither are my colleagues on this side of the aisle with the exception of the Speaker. This is just how we do things in Washington. This is debate.

A \$2 billion funding increase for the Internal Revenue Service is in the President's budget. Now, I want every American to understand that. They just passed a bill last summer supposedly called the Inflation Reduction Act that gives the IRS another \$80 billion to expand. So that is what the American people want: More IRS agents to go target more Americans to raise at most by the CBO's own estimate 100 or \$200 billion over 10 years? So you're going to spend \$80 billion to go target American citizens to bring in more money. By the way, the IRS targets poor people and minorities three to five times more than other Americans. So you're going to go hire more bureaucrats, you got \$80 billion, and what does Biden do? Oh, that is not enough. \$2 billion more for the IRS. Genius.

\$100 million to the Department of Education in grant funding for communities to promote racial and socioeconomic diversity in their schools.

\$62 million for the DOJ to exploit the FACE Act to target pro-life Americans. I could go on and on about the amount of money given to agency after agency, bureaucrat after bureaucrat to target the American people. The FBI targeted my now-friend Scott Smith in Loudoun County, whose daughter was assaulted in a school. He dared to go to the school board. He got challenged by law enforcement, and the DOJ was going to be putting him on a list as a domestic terrorist because the National School Boards Association was colluding with the White House to do so. Is that what we want to fund: a Department of Justice that would put a dad on a list as a domestic terrorist because he went to his school board to try to defend his daughter who was assaulted in a bathroom?

That is what this administration wants to prioritize: Funding a woke, weaponized bureaucracy that is undermining freedom. They want to fund the FBI that went after Mark Houck in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, for daring to defend his son when they were outside of an abortion clinic and somebody was challenging his son when they were exercising their First Amendment rights, and he defended him without anything significant happening. They were not prosecuted by State law. The

feds went in, had a SWAT team at 7 in the morning on a Sunday—the whole family—went into their house threatening Mark Houck.

Is that what we want to fund?

Is that what we want to use the power of government for?

How about the \$16,000—I know it is just \$16,000; I realize that is chicken feed in this establishment—in State Department funding for a pro-prostitution LGBTQ group in Colombia. Is that how we want our tax dollars spent? That is just \$16,000. It doesn't mean anything, does it? It does.

\$1.9 million in Department of Education funding for an Illinois nonprofit that trains teachers to center equity in the classroom. We need our kids to know math, how to read, science, how to lead the world, how to beat China, and we got \$1.9 million to center equity, whatever that hell that means.

\$2 million for the State Department's Race, Ethnicity, and Social Inclusion Unit. As if the State Department is out doing wonderful things in the first place these days.

How about \$158 million in economic law enforcement and military support for Mexico? Pause. Yes, you just heard that correctly. We, the taxpayers, are giving \$158 million to Mexico for economic law enforcement and military support while we are getting flooded at our border, cartels are absolutely running amuck and owning the state of Mexico as a narco-terror state, running fentanyl into America, and killing Americans in Mexico. Congratulations, American people, you bought with \$158 million a narco-terrorist state that is undermining our freedom and liberty killing Americans, endangering migrants, and endangering Texas. Congratulations, Americans.

\$34 million for the Office of the Secretary of Homeland Security, Alejandro Mayorkas. \$34 million for Alejandro Mayorkas to screw up America. Congratulations to the American people on how your tax dollars are being spent.

\$1.7 billion, for the ATF that I described earlier that will make owners of the 10 to 40 million pistol braces in the United States felons. \$6.3 billion for Anthony Fauci's NIAID, which was weaponized to completely lock down the United States and force vaccines on millions of Americans, massively increasing the profit of pharmaceutical companies—Pfizer and Moderna—making like \$100 billion under government mandates for vaccines—government mandates for vaccines with liability protection for the companies for a vaccine that even the morons in the departments over at CDC, NIH, FDA are now at least acknowledging don't really do much for transmission; but, oh, yes, let's give them \$6.3 billion.

\$128 million for the office of the CDC Director who actively mislead Americans about COVID vaccine efficacy while CDC and Big Tech colluded to suppress vaccine information, which we know to be true. We saw testimony yesterday.

Our own colleague, THOMAS MASSIE, had his own social media posts being edited and targeted in a disinformation campaign because anyone who dared question the wisdom of Anthony Fauci, anyone who dared question the government mandate that you stick a needle in your arm because they say so because they politicized a virus and a vaccine, you are going to be set aside. There was going to be disinformation on social media, Twitter, in collusion with all of those guys. They were shutting down free speech.

We should be horrified that the United States of America with a First Amendment to the Constitution, which is supposed to protect free speech, but not for THOMAS MASSIE as a Member of Congress—yes, for him, too—but for every American, every American regardless of the “truth” of what you are saying, the government doesn’t decide what the truth is. That is the whole point of free speech.

Yet, we are funding the very tyrants in the executive branch shutting down free speech, mandating vaccines, using the power of government to go after people and shut down their livelihoods, undermine freedom, undermine economic activity, and put us \$32 trillion in debt so our kids and grandkids are going to inherit a bankrupt, tyrannical America.

We should change that. We should reject that. The great news is Americans across this country are rejecting it. They are saying no. They do want to live free. They don’t want a government that is shutting down their ability to live free or their kids and their grandkids. They do want to send their kids to schools that teach them that America is great and good and teach them the tools they need to succeed in life, rather than teach them that they should be ashamed of their country or be a victim.

The American people under COVID woke up. More parents are homeschooling their kids. More parents are looking for private school. More States are adopting school choice. More businesses are rejecting the vaccine mandates. More individuals are saying no to those mandates.

God bless the young man who is in the United States Navy who rejected the vaccine mandate, and because of our bill that we finally jammed through in December as Republicans isn’t being kicked out of the military, but he is still being harassed, he is still being denied the commanding officer job he always wanted. He is still being denied the ability to advance. They are going after him to pay the \$75,000 of previous student loans. That must end.

\$122 million for the World Health Organization, which pushed lockdowns, vaccine mandates, and colluded with the Chinese Communist Party to cover up its role in COVID’s origin, and now with this administration wants to control our healthcare and control how we are going to deal with vaccines in the future. Why would any Republican vote

to fund the World Health Organization today? Why? We should not. We should reject that. We are Americans. We decide how we are going to live.

\$234 million for the EPA’s clean water program so-called under waters of the United States, WOTUS, that put a 78-year-old veteran in jail for violating the waters of the United States by digging ditches on his land.

□ 1115

That is your government at work, ladies and gentlemen, \$456 million for EPA “clean air programs.”

Everybody wants clean air. I don’t know anybody who doesn’t want clean air. I don’t know any State regulators who don’t want clean air.

What we don’t want is that to be used as an excuse to carry out the new methane tax, drive up gas prices via the ethanol mandate, and destroy reliable coal and natural gas power plants via regulation, which is precisely what it is going to do.

Yet, we are all going to just sit by as Republicans and go, well, shrug. I guess that is just what we do. We have to increase government.

All these kids are running around going, “Well, we have climate change. What are we going to do?” How about we embrace clean-burning American natural gas, develop more nuclear power, and recognize that China and India are the ones that are vastly growing and producing CO<sub>2</sub> by developing more coal-fired plants while we sit around and play games, as I said earlier, with wind and solar, leaving us with unreliable grids and living on unicorn energy policies.

Mr. Speaker, \$108 million in woke EPA environmental justice funding that will funnel through EPA’s new Office of Environmental Justice and External Civil Rights, \$108 million of your taxpayer money for environmental justice when we are \$32 trillion in debt, you literally can’t make up how stupid we are. Literally, you just can’t. It is, like, no, no, no.

I mean, imagine the Founding Fathers going: Wait a minute. Hold on. In 2023, we are going to be \$32 trillion in debt. We are not going to actually secure our borders as a sovereign Nation, allowing them to be wide open. We are going to submit to the authority of international organizations to tell us what to do and fund those international organizations to tell us what to do. We are going to fund massive bureaucracies to create things like the so-called environmental justice department with \$108 million when we are spending a trillion and a half dollars more every year than we take in.

I mean, that is just, like, the tip of the iceberg. How stupid can a people be? The American people aren’t stupid. That is why they look at Congress with utter disdain.

We are stupid unless we change, and that is my request of my colleagues on this side of the aisle, that we demand change.

When there is a debt ceiling fight this summer, when the President wants to play chicken and Russian roulette with the debt ceiling increase to borrow more money to raise our credit card limit, we should demand change. We should demand actual change. We should demand immediate change.

When we say return spending for the bureaucratic state to pre-COVID 2019 levels, and when my colleagues on the other side of the aisle and the President say you can’t do that, you remind them about the \$122 million for the World Health Organization or the \$108 million for the “environmental justice programs,” or the \$15 million for the United Nations bodies that develop the Paris Agreement—just that alone.

How about \$7 million of Department of the Interior funding for the monarch butterfly, \$20 million in earmarks dedicated to sidewalks—\$20 million dedicated in Federal funding for sidewalks.

Boy, there is a real Federal nexus there, huh? Article I, section 8, thou shalt fund sidewalks. It is asinine.

Yet, that is what we do. It is like breathing for Members of Congress. Just keep funding crap because, well, I don’t know. I have a dinner to go to, and I can’t bother to peel back the appropriations bills or the big omnibus bill that is sent over by a bunch of Senators who are running to their steak dinners and can’t even bother to do the appropriations bills in the first place.

This includes 18 Republicans, by the way, who voted for a \$1.7 trillion omnibus spending bill, which I will constantly remind all 18 of them and all Americans of those 18 who voted for a massive \$1.7 trillion omnibus spending bill that denied us the ability to secure the border and expanded the size and scope of the Federal Government.

It is not just a singular, one-party problem, ladies and gentlemen. This body needs a little religion, actual religion, and a little bit of fiscal sanity religion.

We can change that. We can shrink Washington massively. Right now, in year one, we can shrink Washington so that we can get it out of the way and grow our country back to prosperity.

That is step one in reclaiming our American birthright: shrink Washington, grow America.

We can save more than \$3 trillion over the next decade if we cut the funding of the bureaucracy back to pre-COVID levels and cap future growth; rescind \$91 billion of unobligated COVID money just sitting over there right now waiting for a bureaucrat to find something to spend it on; and end the unfair, unlawful \$400 billion student loan bailout that the President promised that is going to be deficit spending this year.

Just boom, \$400 billion of 2023 deficit spending. For what? Paying off the loan of some kid who went to college, got a sociology degree, and is hanging out in his parents’ basement, tweeting and sitting on Instagram, and trying to find a job. Oh, no. We have to pay off

that kid's loan, but the plumber who didn't take out that loan to go to some liberal arts college filled with a bunch of White elite liberals patting themselves on the back for how compassionate they are for Brown people—that is what they do. Let's pay off their loans, but let's make the plumber eat it. That is crazy, absolutely crazy.

We reward irresponsibility instead of actually telling the hardworking American who does it all the right way that they are the one who gets rewarded.

Under no circumstances should Republicans vote to increase the debt to borrow to fund a \$400 billion student loan bailout for rich, liberal, White elitists, for the most part, as a statistical matter, while we are leaving out hardworking Americans who didn't take out those loans like my wife, the daughter of a single mom who took two jobs, worked hard, and sent her to a State university, who worked to pay off her loans.

She is still paying them. Mr. Speaker, 20 years since we graduated from law school, my wife is still paying off the remaining vestiges of her law school student loans after paying her way and getting loans to go to Texas A&M and the University of Texas School of Law, doing the right thing, driving a 2000 Corolla with no options for, like, a decade.

That is what you do if you are responsible. That is how you are supposed to live. We can save that money right now and do more good for the American people than funding and paying off these student loans.

We can reclaim the \$80 billion of Internal Revenue Service money that is sitting in a pot over there right now. We can reform welfare programs to get people back to work, protecting Social Security retirement and Medicare benefits in the process.

We can grow America by expanding liberty and promoting economic growth, forcing policy changes to make the government do its job, curb regulatory power by enacting the REIN IN Act to make Congress decide if the regulations by bureaucrats should be enacted if they have a major economic impact.

These are all things we can do right now and save up to \$3 trillion over 10 years as a first step to shrinking Washington and growing America. That is our plan. The President's plan is to expand Washington and undermine America.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOOD).

Mr. GOOD of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. ROY for his leadership once again and in particular on this all-important issue of the fiscal and economic stability of our country. More than that, not just the financial part of it, which we cannot overstate—we can't overstate the harm done to our country from a spending standpoint with \$32 trillion in national debt on the backs of our children and our grand-

children, \$100,000 per citizen, but in addition to that, how that debt and how that spending has accumulated for the purpose of literally harming the American people.

We can't overstate how our own government has become weaponized against its own citizens, trying to control every aspect of our lives, trying to control decisions like whether or not we can have or use a gas stove; whether or not we can choose what kind of car we want to drive; whether or not we can heat or cool our homes the way that we want to; whether or not we can exercise our God-given, constitutionally protected Second Amendment rights; whether or not we can make decisions for ourselves on whether or not we can operate our business, earn a living, educate our children the way that we want to without the heavy hand of government coming in.

We have \$32 trillion in national debt, \$100,000 per citizen. What is this President's response with the budget proposal that he rolled out yesterday? To increase spending about 56 percent beyond where it was pre-COVID.

From \$4.4 trillion in spending, this President wants to increase it by \$2½ trillion to \$6.9 trillion. That \$6.9 trillion—for just 1 year, mind you—is about \$20,000 per American citizen.

How many Americans today would vote to borrow and spend—we have to put “borrow” in front of all of it—to borrow and spend \$20,000 on their personal credit card to do things that are not only not helpful to them but much of which is harmful to them on top of the \$100,000 in national debt that we have per citizen today?

Thank God for Republicans who are going to come into the gap and stand on the wall to defend the American people and finally bring some fiscal stability to our country, cut the spending, and deal a blow against the woke weaponized government that is assaulting and harming the American people.

We are going to do that with the opportunity we have as we face the debt ceiling limit. We are going to utilize this opportunity of our newfound congressional House rules that are going to allow us to put reforms in place for not just this year and next year but for the future to put us on a path to fiscal responsibility.

I thank Congressman ROY from Texas for showing leadership, once again, on the most important, fundamental issues for our country.

Mr. ROY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Virginia for his leadership. We joined together with our colleagues at the House Freedom Caucus this morning to announce what we believe is, I would say, the bare minimum, if you will, sort of the baseline for resetting the table on how we deal with spending and, importantly, empowering the American people by shrinking Washington and growing America because we trust the people to do it, not government.

This is an age-old debate, but this is something where leviathan, this great

beast, this thing we call the Federal Government, is growing and expanding in power in ways that concern every American.

□ 1130

Just yesterday, in the House Judiciary Committee, there were conversations about the power of the Federal Government being used to chill speech, to target American citizens, to shut down their First Amendment rights.

Now think about it. Is there anything more concerning than the power of the government being used to chill the fundamental rights given to us by our Creator, as reflected in the Bill of Rights, than what we are seeing right now?

The FTC is going after, right now, targeting, they want to know—wait—who is involved with all of this. They are actually targeting journalists, targeting private citizens.

Is that what the power of the government is supposed to be used for, I would ask the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. GOOD of Virginia. Clearly not. And the loss of trust and confidence to the degree that it has been lost in the last 2 years in our Federal Government, in our election system, in our government agencies, in even our department of injustice, I would call it, is just so damaging to the future of our country.

How do we get that back? How do we restore it?

We start by not funding it, not funding those agencies, those bureaucracies that are perpetuating such harm on the American people.

The gentleman made the point earlier today so well, that we talk about going back to pre-COVID spending at \$4.4 trillion. At that point, that was record spending in the history of the country. That was leading us to some, at that point, maybe \$25 trillion in national debt, an untold amount that we haven't had since World War II, that was pre-COVID. That was out of hand. That was out of control.

It is just this President who has taken it to a new level; \$10 trillion in new spending in the first 2 years of an administration has never happened before in the history of the country. But it is not just the dollars, which if this was good spending, meaning things that we thought were justified, if you will, or positive things, we don't have the money, we can't afford it, we are bankrupt.

But worse than that, we are spending money, literally, to make our military weaker. We are spending money, literally, to keep our border open to the Mexican crime cartels. We are spending money, literally, to harm our kids in schools. We are spending money, literally, to try to ruin the country.

If you were setting out 2 years ago to try to ruin the country, what would you do differently than what this administration has done, while borrowing the money to do it?

Mr. ROY. I asked earlier, if you set out over the last 2 or 3 decades, to do

a worse job than the leadership of this country, in this Chamber, the Senate, the bureaucracy, and the White House, could you imagine doing a worse job than over the last 3 decades?

I mean, in truth, the amount of debt that has been accumulated, right—in 2003, when I was a baby staffer for a Senator on the other side of this building, the national debt was about \$6 trillion.

Mr. GOOD of Virginia. We couldn't imagine it at that time.

Mr. ROY. Right. It is now \$26 trillion more than that, and the President is patting himself on the back for saying, well, we are not going to increase the debt by \$20 trillion; we are only going to increase it by \$17 trillion over the next decade by taxing and regulating the American people into oblivion.

I would just ask the gentleman a last question here, and then we are going to—in a couple of minutes I want to yield to my friend from West Virginia.

Would it surprise the gentleman that we are spending \$158 million in economic, law enforcement, and military support for Mexico—so, again, the American people, you and I, we are funding to the tune of \$158 million, Mexico's law enforcement and military, while it is becoming a narco-terrorist state; cartels are literally killing American citizens in Mexico; infiltrating our country, causing 72,000 dead Americans from fentanyl poisoning? This is the thing the American people don't understand. Does the gentleman agree?

Mr. GOOD of Virginia. We are borrowing an additional \$150 million to send it to Mexico that is controlled by the crime cartels, so that they can utilize that funding to invade our southern border, with the individuals we are allowing to pass through their country trafficking drugs, human trafficking, sex trafficking, who knows what, hundreds of thousands every month. Yet, we are going to borrow \$150 million to send it to them to help them do it.

Mr. ROY. That is correct. If the gentleman doesn't mind, I am going to end here with a few minutes on the border and then yield to the gentleman from West Virginia. I thank my friend from Virginia for coming down.

On that point, what we are funding, 4½ million encounters of illegal aliens at the southern border since the beginning of the Biden administration, with 7,000, 8,000 migrants crossing a day, there are 1.3 million got-aways, and nearly 1.7 million illegal aliens released into the United States. That means we have released more into our communities than the population of at least 11 individual States.

Under this administration, there have been surges of known or suspected terrorists at the southwest border. There were zero in fiscal year 2019, 3 in fiscal year 2020, 15 in fiscal year 2021, 98 in fiscal year 2022, and 53 so far after 1 quarter in fiscal year 2023, these are individuals that are affiliated with known or suspected terrorists at the southwest border.

Last summer, 53 migrants died in a tractor trailer in San Antonio, which I represent, cooked in the Texas heat; and that is somehow compassion?

Mr. Speaker, 880 migrants have died crossing the U.S.-Mexico border in fiscal year 2022, and that does not count the thousands that have died across south Texas and other places and ranches; doesn't count the little girls sitting in stash houses, as we speak, getting sold into the sex trafficking trade, as Mayorkas and Biden fiddle, while our Nation's borders are burning.

Just last week, four Americans traveling to Mexico, one of them a mother of six, they were attacked by cartels in broad daylight. Two are dead. Two are getting care; and we give \$158 million to Mexico for law enforcement and military.

This is why, today, I am re-introducing my legislation to designate these drug cartels as the terrorist organization that they are, so that any individual associated with them, that provides material support to a designated FTO would be sanctioned and could be pursued, lawfully.

Materials include, but are not limited to providing weapons, safe houses, lethal substances. Representatives and members of a designated FTO would be subject to removal. Financial institutions could be targeted. But the main point is to make clear that these dangerous cartels are the equivalent of ISIS and al-Qaida, right off our border, killing Americans, killing Mexicans, turning Mexico into narco-terrorist states; giving China an avenue to get to the United States to pump fentanyl into our communities, and this administration is doing nothing.

This Congress must not continue to fund a government that is at war with the American people, funding a woke weaponized Federal Government that is undermining our freedom, undermining our prosperity, undermining our liberty.

It is our duty, as Republicans and all Members of Congress, to use the power of the purse to defund the executive branch that is tyrannically at odds with the well-being of the American people.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOONEY), my good friend. I appreciate his great service to our country, and I look forward to hearing from him.

#### RETURNING TO THE GOLD STANDARD

Mr. MOONEY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the passion of my good friend from Texas, and many of the points he is making need to be heard and understood. Even if it is uncomfortable, the truth has to be told.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about legislation I am promoting to return the United States to the gold standard. As was discussed earlier, our Nation is facing an inflation crisis not seen in over 40 years.

Inflation is a regressive tax hurting lower-income Americans more than anyone else. West Virginians have seen

the value of their savings erode before their very eyes as a result of the reckless tax-and-spending spree of President Joe Biden and the Washington Democrats and an overzealous Federal Reserve.

Thanks to Democrats, your 401(k) is now more like a 301(k), and it will go even lower if they stay in power.

Today, our national debt is over \$32 trillion, which is borrowed, not only from Americans, but also from foreign adversaries.

We know who is responsible for the current debt crisis, but the question has to be asked: What in our country's history allowed us to get to this point?

The answer can actually be traced back to 1971, when President Richard Nixon took the United States off the gold standard. Rather than tackle the root causes of economic challenges, Nixon severed the dollar's convertibility to gold once and for all. President Nixon said at the time that that would actually combat inflation.

Art Laffer, a well-known and respected economist, accurately warned that taking the United States off of the gold standard would actually only exacerbate these problems. What followed was a period of severe inflation, rivaled only by what we are seeing today.

Domestic production became more expensive and corporate profits declined, so companies were encouraged to shift production abroad, overseas where labor costs were cheaper.

Today, our number one economic rival is China, which continues to attract American companies, due to the cheapness of production there.

Now, the gold standard, as we know it, is not actually using the gold as currency but, rather, tying the dollar bill directly to the value of that gold. Under the gold standard, any American would be able to trade their dollars for a fixed amount of gold.

By linking the dollar to the value of gold, the money supply could only be increased if the supply of gold increases. This connection protects the purchasing power of your hard-earned tax dollar.

The gold standard would protect against Washington's irresponsible spending habits and the creation of money out of thin air. Prices would be shaped by economics, rather than instincts and wishes of Federal bureaucrats. With the gold standard, no longer would our economy be at the mercy of the Federal Reserve and reckless Washington spenders.

Through government mismanagement and economic manipulation, is it any surprise that many Americans are looking for alternatives to the U.S. dollar in cryptocurrencies?

Americans are losing confidence in our currency. It is long past time for Congress to begin considering a return to the gold standard. That is why I will be introducing legislation to do exactly that, as I have in previous Congresses.

Under my proposal, the Secretary of the Treasury would define the U.S. dollar in terms of a fixed weight of gold

based on the market price, while allowing dollar bills to be exchanged for gold at that rate.

Had the United States been on the gold standard, or some other fixed standard, we would not be in the inflation crisis we are in today.

I hope to work with the new Republican majority to make sure this issue gets the attention it deserves.

#### EXPANDING ACCESS TO CAPITAL FOR RURAL JOB CREATORS

Mr. MOONEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address my bill, the Expanding Access to Capital for Rural Job Creators Act.

Earlier this year, the House resoundingly passed my bipartisan Expanding Access to Capital for Rural Job Creators Act. Rural small businesses face unique challenges that big city businesses do not. Nearly 20 percent of the United States population lives in rural areas and yet, businesses in rural areas raised under 2 percent of total capital over the last 3 years.

West Virginia, which I am so proud to represent, is a very rural State, where no city has a population greater than 50,000 people, so my legislation simply requires the Security and Exchange Commission, SEC, Office of the Advocate for Small Business Capital Formation to identify and report to Congress those challenges rural small businesses face when trying to access our capital markets. This will make it easier for Congress to then act to address these problems.

My bill would make it easier for Congress to do our jobs and make sure rural small businesses like in West Virginia, are not left behind. I hope the Senate takes up this commonsense measure promptly.

Mr. ROY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from West Virginia and appreciate his strong passion in representing the great people of West Virginia. He is a good friend, and I am glad that he could join us here today.

Earlier, I was talking about the need for this country to reclaim economic growth in order to dig ourselves out of the hole that this absurd institution and lack of leadership from Washington, D.C., has created for the American people in the form of \$32 trillion of debt and ridiculously stagnant economic growth.

After decades of being able to achieve growth in the 3 and 4 percent range, we are now sitting in the doldrums of 1-percent-type economic growth. That might even be rather robust in the era of Joe Biden.

I yield to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BISHOP) to expand upon this important point.

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Mr. BISHOP of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, Mr. ROY, for yielding.

The President's budget recommendation came over a month late yesterday, and there was one detail I read in The New York Times, so it must be true, al-

though that is the only place I have had a chance to see it yet, and what immediately popped into my mind when I read this detail, is that Karine Jean-Pierre said last week—I can remember her saying it—that the President's economic plan is working for the American people. That popped back into my head, because the detail disclosed by The New York Times is that the administration predicts economic growth in this fiscal year not 3½ percent, not 4 percent certainly, not 2½ percent, not 1½ percent, but six-tenths of a percent.

You have to start talking about economic growth and what the economists call basis points, because it is so small. So if the economic plan of the Biden administration is working for the American people, that means 60 basis points of economic growth anticipated in the year.

And guess what the Biden administration says about that? We should do nothing different. We should keep doing the same thing that is producing six-tenths of a percent of economic growth, except one other thing: We should pile the burden of a lot more taxes on the economy, because apparently that is going to—because what do we need? Thirty basis points of economic growth? Republicans believe we need to change.

Mr. ROY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my friend from North Carolina.

Mr. Speaker, I would inquire as to how much time we have remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas has 8 minutes remaining.

Mr. ROY. Mr. Speaker, I don't know if I will use every bit of that. I appreciate the point that the gentleman from North Carolina just made, because it is critically important and it merits at least one final repetition, that this great country racked up the level of debt that we currently have today relative to the size of its economy in 1946. But why was that? To rid the world of fascism, to confront our enemies, to defeat those enemies, and to protect this great country.

Then we embarked for 50 years and grew ourselves to the point to be able to balance the budget by 2000, with strong economic growth. It took that much time.

Here we sit today in 2023 with \$32 trillion of debt, sitting, at the President's own admission, at 60 basis points of economic growth this year. He wants his grand solution to be, oh, we will just rack up \$17 trillion more debt in the next decade, because I am going to save \$3 trillion by taxing the American people and regulating the American people.

It doesn't work. This is President Biden's actual form of voodoo economics. He is going to level this country, layer mountains more debt on our kids and grandkids, all while funding the very things that are undermining our ability to have economic growth, prosperity, and freedom.

As I noted before, the millions of dollars going to the EPA to turn an American citizen into a felon and put him into jail because he had a pond on his ranch, the millions of dollars in the name of clean air that are going to methane regulations to drive the price of gas and the price of energy up for the average American.

Every single American should demand of his or her Representative in this body that we stand up to a tyrannical executive branch overstepping its bounds, undermining our freedom, and undermining economic growth.

Every Member of this body should look to cut spending this year of the Federal bureaucracy, return it to pre-COVID levels as a baseline, save \$3 trillion by getting government out of the way, restore economic growth and hope and opportunity for our kids and grandkids, stop funding the very things that are undermining our well-being, secure our country, secure our border, have a sparingly used but lethal, nonwoke military that will kill people and destroy things when they need to, and restore the greatness of this country by shrinking Washington and growing America.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to direct their remarks to the Chair and not to a perceived viewing audience.

#### CELEBRATING VIRGIN ISLANDS HISTORY MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Ms. PLASKETT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Speaker, it is so exciting to be up here and to be able to have this discussion.

I want to thank the minority leader, my colleague and good friend, Mr. HAKEEM JEFFRIES, for allowing me this time to direct everyone's attention to the importance of this month.

I know that it is Women's History Month, and we have been hearing so much about this. But what an honor it is for me to stand in front of you today because it is also Virgin Islands History Month.

I stand on the shoulders of strong Virgin Islanders who came before me, a people who are known for their courage, leadership, sacrifice, and, most importantly, their resilience.

The Virgin Islands are known for so much more than just white sandy beaches and as a popular vacation destination. I tell people all the time, there are more than just the beaches. There is a reason why seven nations have fought, fought, and done what was necessary to attempt to own these beautiful islands.

We are made of culture-rich lands and a diverse history. Though not always pretty, there is great beauty in